

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ABU DH 00256 030916Z

21

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 030905Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2535

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0256

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, EAID

SUBJ: SYRIAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

REF: DAMASCUS 325

1. SORRY TO HEAR OF CONTRETEMPS ABOUT SYRIAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, AND HOPE THAT IN DUE COURSE SARG'S FEELINGS WILL BE ASSUAGED AND PROGRAM CAN BE RESTORED. WE WILL OF COURSE LAY OFF DOWN HERE WHILE THESE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS PROCEED. IT WAS AT SHAIKH KHALIFA'S REQUEST THAT WE DID NOT INFORM ANYONE ELSE HERE (SHAIKH KHALIFA SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED SYRIAN AMBASSADOR), BUT IT IS NOT SURPRISING, SINCE UAE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS FULL OF EXPATRIATE ADVISORS, THAT SOMEONE INFORMED SYRIAN AMBASSADOR. THIS INDIVIDUAL IS SUPER-ARAB NATIONALIST WHO HAS PROBABLY DONE HIS BEST TO PORTRAY THIS AS SOME KIND OF INSULT TO SYRIAN PRIDE.

2. ALTHOUGH SYRIAN AMBASSADOR MAY HAVE COMPLAINED TO GOVERNMENT HERE, I AM REASONABLY CONFIDENT THERE WILL BE NO LASTING EFFECT ON US-UAEG RELATIONS. I WILL HOWEVER SEEK OPPORTUNITY TO CALL ON SHAIKH KHALIFA TO EXPLAIN SITUATION. I WILL POINT OUT THAT THROUGHOUT IT HAS BEEN OUR DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL, BUT WE SEEM TO HAVE RUN INTO SOME SYRIAN SENSITIVITIES WHICH WE HOPE CAN BE OVERCOME IN TIME. IN MEANTIME I WILL ASK HIM TO HOLD IN ABEYANCE ANY QUESTION OF ABU DHABI PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROGRAM.

STERNER

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NNN

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